

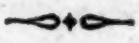
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*A Sketch of the Life and Character of the Rev.
THOMAS ADAM, Rector of Wintringham,
Lincolnshire, England.*



THE Rev. THOMAS ADAM was born at Leeds, in the West-Riding of Yorkshire, Feb. 25, 1701; his father, Mr. Henry Adam, was of the profession of the Law, and Town-Clerk of that Corporation. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Jasper Blythman, Esq. Recorder there, by whom he had six children, Jasper, Henry, Thomas, Catherine, Elizabeth, and Sibyl.

Our author, Thomas, was first put to the public Grammar-School in that town, under the care of the pious and worthy Mr. Thomas Barnard, then head master of that school, and afterwards to the school at Wakefield; from whence, about the usual time of life, he went to Christ's College, Cambridge. But, after he had resided there about two years, he removed to Hart-Hall, (now Hertford College,) in Oxford, under the care of that famous disciplinarian, Dr. Newton, (head of that seminary, and its founder as

a college,) for whose memory in that capacity he ever retained the highest respect.

By the interest of an uncle, a person of some eminence in the profession of the law, and who had been of singular service to the family of the patron, about the year 1724 he was presented to the living of Wintringham, in Lincolnshire, of which he continued rector fifty-eight years; but not being of age to take possession, it was held for him by a friend for about a year.

Not long after he settled at Wintringham, his uncle, who seemed much set upon the advancement of so promising a nephew, urged him greatly to come up to London, *to show himself*, as he termed it, concluding this to be the most likely way to recommend him to the favour of those who were most able to advance him in the world: but when Mr. Adam understood that his view was to put him in the way of more preferment, he was so far from embracing this advantageous proposal, that he thought it his duty to decline the invitation in as civil a manner as he could, at the same time returning for answer, *that it was incumbent upon him to be with his flock at Wintringham*; an answer which gave great offence to his uncle, as it frustrated all his well-meant schemes for his promotion and advancement in the church.

Nor did he ever afterwards depart from the same disinterested determination, to refuse all additional preferment.

When Dr. Thomas was promoted to the Bishopric of Lincoln, our author, whose good behaviour at the university had gained him the esteem of his governors there, was strongly recommended by them to his peculiar notice, as one whom he would find more especially deserving, amongst his clergy, of his attention and regard. And it is very probable that we find him, in consequence of this, appointed to preach

before his lordship at Gainsborough, at his primary visitation there. But how much soever the bishop might be at any time disposed to befriend him, he gave him to understand that he was perfectly satisfied with what he at present had, then not quite *l.* 200 per annum, nor ever meant to engage in any second charge.

Not many years after his coming to Wintringham, Mr. Adam thought proper to change his state of life, by marrying Susannah, the eldest daughter of the Rev. Mr. Cooke, vicar of the neighbouring parish of Roxby, by whom he had one only daughter, who died in her infancy; and, after having lived together with much comfort during thirty years, or more, in the year 1760, he was called upon to resign this dearest earthly treasure into his hands from whom he had received her. He was greatly affected by this loss, but bore it with a truly Christian resignation.

There is nothing in his history, after this period, which calls for particular notice. An uninteresting sameness of events must almost necessarily attend a life passed in the obscure shade of country retirement. We shall therefore dwell upon those parts of his character as a minister and a Christian, which may furnish some considerations not unworthy of regard and imitation.

From the account which has been already given of Mr. Adam's faithful attachment to his parish at Wintringham, and his determined refusal of all additional preferment, it is natural for the reader to suppose that he was peculiarly diligent amongst his people, and instant in season and out of season, for the conversion and salvation of their souls. But this does not by any means appear to have been the case *at that time*: for, though he was very exact and regular, in the discharge of all the public parts of his office, and his sermons had even then a zeal and fervour in them be-

yond the generality ; yet, as he himself afterwards observed to a particular friend, "neither his life nor his doctrine could be of any peculiar use to them, for he lived in a conformity to the world, and his doctrine was *contrary to the cross of Christ**."

We find in his private reflections a remark of his own, which will fully show his judgment of the case on the review of it many years afterwards.

"Intrusion into the ministry of worldly ends, and absolute unfitness for it;—in great ignorance of Christ;—great unconcern for the salvation of souls;—consequent sloth and remissness;—squandering a large income in sensual pleasure, and when I was something awakened, doing what I did in self-dependence and self-seeking, How awful!"

How long it was after his entrance into the ministry, before it pleased God to give him a clearer insight into his own state, and the nature of his calling, we cannot exactly determine; though it seems probable that his conscience soon began to be not fully satisfied. All that we can gather on this head with certainty, is, that he received his first impressions of a serious kind from the writings of the mystics, particularly from the works of Mr. Law, which appears to be further confirmed by the peculiar intimacy which he is well known to have had for many years, in the middle part of his life, with some ministers of these sentiments.

In this state he continued several years, greatly harassed in his mind and conscience; and though now more earnest respecting both his own soul and

* Lest this expression should appear in any degree obscure to some of our readers, we would observe, that what Mr. Adam meant by it, was, that he was not preaching Christ crucified, as the foundation of hope for pardon and justification with God, but man's righteousness, thus making the cross of Christ of no effect.

those of his people, yet a stranger to real peace, and full of continual doubts and fears. He saw indeed the law to be holy, just, and good, but found, after all his utmost care and endeavour to fulfil it, he fell so short of its demands, and was so sinful, that he was continually under its righteous condemnation.

It was not till about the year 1748, that his mind gained any effectual relief. While he continued a disciple of Mr. Law, though growing in a conviction of his sinfulness, and becoming more strict and serious, yet still he could gain no solid peace of conscience. All his strictest mortifications, or multiplied exact performance of duties, were over-ruled by the more strict law of God, whose divine spirituality he could not attain to perfectly, nor save himself from its just condemnation. In this situation, therefore, his soul was in great distress; and that which served to heighten it the more was, that he saw the word of God, instead of giving him any ground of comfort against his fears, was, on the contrary, in many places fully against him. Amongst the rest, *the Epistle to the Romans* was particularly offensive and distressing to him in this view. He perceived that it evidently struck at, and overthrew the very foundation of his hope, and, (as he then supposed,) made no account of a life of superior piety and godliness. As he was at this time ignorant of God's righteousness, and of any other way of salvation than by the merit of his own goodness, the levelling strain of the apostle was, in a very high degree, grating to his self-righteous pride. He could not bear to see those that were esteemed good men treated only as sinners, and all their best righteousness passed by as of no account towards their justification. Hence he was sensible that St. Paul taught a very different doctrine from that which he held and preached; and that they were directly contrary to each other in the important article of

man's justification and acceptance in the sight of God: for being possessed of much good sense and unfeigned honesty of heart, (a leading feature in his character all through life,) and being truly desirous to know, and to teach his people the real truth of God's word, he would not suffer his conscience to be pacified and laid asleep with the too common way of persuading himself that both he and the apostle meant, in reality, the same thing, though they evidently appeared so opposite; neither could he bear the thoughts of being a teacher of false doctrine to the people committed to his charge, and that in a point of such essential consequence. Like a worthy and diligent minister of God, therefore, and a faithful pastor of his flock, he was determined to take all possible pains to inform himself clearly on the subject: to this end he applied himself, with all his power, to every probable source of information. Hammond, Whitby, Grotius, with other of the most eminent commentators, were consulted with the utmost care and attention;—but all in vain. These gave him no relief*. He found they understood the case no better than himself, and was amazed to see men of sense and understanding take pains to impose upon themselves

* From much experience and observation, it was the advice of Mr. Adam, to young divines especially, not to be too forward in taking their sense of the Scriptures from Commentators. And we will venture to assert the justice of the caution.—If it be asked, Where then can we go in cases of difficulty? It is answered—Where Mr. Adam went, i. e. *to God in prayer*; comparing one part of the word of God with another, and humbly looking to *him* for his teaching and direction. Let this be duly tried, and we doubt not its success will prove the soundness of the observation. A clear insight will then be often given into the true sense by such a satisfactory solution as no comment can afford, and our faith stand not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God. Psalm cxix. 18. John vi. 45. James i. 5.

and others, by labouring to no purpose, with much expense of learning and argument, to reconcile things so diametrically opposite, and to unite two systems which it is the professed design and intention of the apostle to oppose to each other, and to show their necessary and irreconcilable contradiction. Rom. xi. 6.

In this situation of things he went on for some time, determined not to give up the point without obtaining full satisfaction ; though to all appearance no nearer than when he first began, and even perplexed more and more. He could not suppose indeed that St. Paul could be wrong, being persuaded of the divine inspiration which attended his writings, or that things which he had written, were indeed unintelligible, much less that he would really inculcate or encourage licentiousness of life. Like a truly sensible man he began to suspect that the fault must be in himself, and in the system which he had adopted, and that he had not properly considered the Apostle's doctrine with all its connexions and relations : leaving therefore the bewildering guidance of commentators and expositors, he betook himself to the fountain of all knowledge, beseeching God and himself to teach and direct him*.

* While our author's mind was thus affected, many of his friends and acquaintance feared lest he was going out of his senses, through too great study and care about religion.—This is nothing uncommon. The little attention which most people give to their souls, and the slight views which they have of the evil of sin, together with their lamentable ignorance of the great truths of God's word, make them form that suspicion of all who begin seriously to consider the infinite importance of these things, and to feel their weight ; whereas it is only the just and natural effect of a right conviction of sin.—What should call for our distressing grief, if sin against God does not ? Or what should engage all our anxiety equally with a concern how we may obtain pardon,

One morning in his study, being much distressed on the subject, he fell down upon his knees before God in prayer, spread his case before the Divine majesty and goodness, implored him to pity his distress, and to guide him by his *Holy Spirit* into the right understanding of his own truth. When he arose from his supplication, he took the Greek Testament and sat himself down to read the six first chapters of the epistle to the Romans, sincerely desirous to be taught of God, and to receive, in the simplicity of a child, the word of *his revelation*; when, to his unspeakable comfort and astonishment, his difficulties vanished;—a most clear and satisfactory light was given him into this great subject;—He saw the doctrine of justification by Jesus Christ alone, through faith, to be the great subject of the gospel—the highest display of the divine perfections;—the happiest relief for his burdened conscience;—and the most powerful principle of all constant and unfeigned holiness of heart and life. He was rejoiced exceedingly; found peace and comfort springing up in his mind; his conscience was purged from guilt, through the atoning blood of Christ, and his heart set at liberty to run the way of God's commandments without fear, in a spirit of filial love and holy delight; and from that hour he began to preach salvation *through faith in Jesus Christ*

and recover the divine favour? Our author was lost here.—The means which he had tried were ineffectual. His own soul and his people's were at stake; and till this great difficulty was solved, it is no wonder that his mind could find no rest. Whoever consults the Scriptures will find, that there is nothing new in such circumstances. Psalms vi.—xxxii.—lxxvii.—cxxx.—with many other parts, will show a similar situation of things in the minds of the true servants of God in those times, nor has it been otherwise in any age of the church; and we may venture to assert, that *this madness*, (if such it be called,) is far wiser than the wisdom of the world.

alone, to man by nature and practice lost, and condemned under the law, and, as his own expression is, *Always a sinner**.

His sermons, though before animated by an honest zeal, were no longer mere lectures of morality, or filled only with legal condemnation. While all godliness in principle and practice was duly enforced, the enlivening display of that glorious Saviour, whose worth and excellence he had now tasted, and who was become all his salvation and all his desire, seasoned every discourse.

Those excellent and searching lectures on the Church catechism†, which have met with the general approbation of good men, and have passed through several editions, and which discover, in so eminent a manner, the able divine and the experienced Christian, were the early fruit of this alteration in his views of Christianity. A happy evidence of the great benefit which he had hereby received, and of his earnest zeal and ability to communicate it for the advantage of others.

About the time that this change took place, he stumbled, (to use his own expression in the case,) on some of the writings of that famous champion of the reformation, Martin Luther. If he had seen these in his former state, when he was well contented with his own righteousness, we may justly suppose he would at once have rejected them with the utmost disdain

* In gratitude to God for his great mercy in opening his eyes, as well as to assist such of his fellow-creatures as might be in his case, he afterwards, in the year 1771, published a paraphrase of the eleven first chapters of the Epistle to the Romans, (in which all the doctrinal part is contained,) where the reader will find the whole scheme of our redemption laid open in a most clear and masterly manner, with many excellent improvements and observations.

† The Catechism of the Church of England.

and abhorrence, as the very quintessence of Antinomianism ; and however he might reverence St. Paul, as being an inspired Apostle, would have made no hesitation to have spurned them from him, as contrary to the gospel of Christ, and subversive of all true godliness. This many, doubtless, have done through want of the same divine teaching respecting their real state, of which Mr. Adam was now happily become the subject. But his mind being now brought down, and, by the discipline of the law convincing him deeply of his sinfulness, even in his best state, he was so far from being offended at the boldness of expression* and freedom of sentiment which he there met with, that he perceived them to be the very thing which his soul wanted, and the doctrine of St. Paul,

* It will readily be allowed, that there are in the writings of Martin Luther some expressions, which seem to savour of Antinomianism, and from which imputation it would be very difficult to defend them against a critical scrutiny :—But that they were never meant in that light is evident, not only from their admitting of a very different sense when candidly considered with their context, but from Luther's writings against the Anabaptists of his times on this very account.

The genius and temper of the writer must be considered, as well as the age in which he lived, and the fundamental errors which he combatted. He was a plain blunt man, and had an aversion to those softenings which are so fashionable in the present day, and thought they would injure the force of what he said, and make it less pointed against those errors which he had it in his heart to demolish. And although such bold strokes may give offence to those that feel nothing of his real want of a Saviour ; yet they that know the urgency of their case like Mr. Adam, will find them the only remedy that can reach their disorder. And while the cold enervated exactness of the wise and prudent affords them no relief, this will be a balm to their wounded consciences, and the richest cordial to their fainting souls. And may we not add, that the divine blessing which has in all ages attended Luther's works, is no inconsiderable argument in favour of their truth and soundness ?

and that however many may affect to admire the one, who yet at the same time reject and make light of the other, they must, in reality, stand or fall together; since they both speak one and the same thing, and all the objections which are prudentially brought against the reformer, lie equally, in all their force, against the inspired Apostle also, and against the doctrine which he so strenuously inculcates.

This celebrated writer, therefore, was always his peculiar favourite, and often would he, with much thankfulness to God, and gratitude of heart, acknowledge to his friends the singular help which he found from his writings, particularly from his excellent comment on the epistle to the Galatians, highly recommending it to their serious perusal, for its admirable use, and truly evangelical doctrine.

In this blessed and happy faith of the gospel he went on from this time to the very end of his days, growing in grace, and in the knowledge of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and adorning the doctrine of God his Saviour in all things, by his truly Christian life and conversation. Nor did increasing years, experience, and reading, give him any ground to alter the opinion which he had now espoused, or to depart from it in any degree; but, on the contrary, he was daily confirmed more and more both in the truth, and in the necessity of these doctrines, while he found them, in sickness and in health, a sovereign cordial to his heart, and the alone, but all-sufficient support of his soul. This testimony he fully bore to them in his last illness, frequently repeating to his friends around him, *I find my foundation able to bear me.*

His departure was full of that serenity and peace which arise from a true acquaintance with Christ and his salvation. His body, worn out with the repeated attacks of his disorder, and with increasing years and

infirmity, gradually sunk into the arms of death, while his soul winged its happy flight into the bosom of that blessed Redeemer, who had long been his portion and his all.

On the 31st day of March, 1784, and in the 84th year of his age, he departed without a groan, and sweetly fell asleep in Jesus.

Thus lived and died this eminent servant of Jesus Christ, full of days, and full of grace ; gathered as a shock of corn in its season into the garner of his heavenly master. May we have grace to follow his good example, and may the holy Spirit lead us on by the same way, to the same rest which remaineth for the people of God.

His character as a scholar, was very respectable. He had learning without ostentation, and, to a good acquaintance with the Greek and Latin classics, joined a considerable knowledge of Hebrew and the writings of the Fathers. But, though a man of taste, and well able to distinguish himself in the circle of letters, he made it a point of conscience to lay aside the scholar when he addressed his people, and studied to accommodate himself to the capacity of the meanest of his hearers, that none might be unedified.

His views of the ministry were serious and honourable. We have already seen how far he was from looking upon it as a profession of advantage, in the answers which he gave to his Uncle, and to the Bishop of Lincoln. He could not bear to see or to hear of the prostitution of the sacred character to such low and unworthy ends. A minister of Jesus Christ appeared to him a person devoted to the service of God and the souls of men, and, therefore, not at liberty to live after his own will, and spend his income as he would that of an estate ; but, as this is appropriated to him out of the substance of the people for the labour of their souls, he is in all duty

and conscience bound to reside amongst them, to lay himself out for their good, and attend to their benefit and instruction. "Meditate upon these things,—give thyself wholly to them," was his standing motto for a minister of the gospel of Christ.

His discourses are full of weighty matter, and are most honest and direct addresses to the heart and conscience. The heart, indeed, was ever his peculiar study. Being deeply acquainted with its exceeding deceitfulness and evil, his attention was always particularly directed here. Hence it was the great object of his ministry to undeceive his fellow-creatures respecting their own imagined righteousness, to detect them to themselves, to strip them of their vain pretences, and to bring them in guilty before God and their own consciences. For he well knew, that till this is done, Christ and his salvation are of little or no value. "They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

After the example of his divine Master, it was his constant endeavour to establish true humility as the ground-work of Christ's religion. Not that affected resemblance of it, which is often put on to please the world, and leaves the heart, all the time, unhumbled, and only more pleased with itself, because of this its supposed excellence ; but that true lowliness of soul, which is founded in a deep sense of its sinfulness, and exceeding unworthiness before God. This was the humility which he laboured after for himself and others ; a humility proceeding from a divine principle, and influencing the whole man. He pitied the high and inconsiderate profession of many who love to put themselves forward, and to be looked upon as *somebody* in the religious world, and esteemed the complaints and self-accusations of a broken and contrite heart, a far better evidence of a Christian state than

the loudest pretensions of the bold and self-confident.

The practical parts of Christianity had ever his most sacred attention and regard, and were strongly enforced as the necessary and inseparable consequence of true saving faith: For, though no man ever gloried more in the cross of Christ, or was more full and clear in maintaining the doctrine of *Christ's blood and righteousness* as the only justification and hope of the soul, yet did he ever in the strongest terms inculcate that they who have believed in God, should be careful to maintain good works. A strict and conscientious adherence to integrity and uprightness in all our dealings, and to truth and sincerity in our words, was a matter of high consequence in his estimation. Hence he entertained a very unfavourable opinion of the religion of those who could suffer themselves to deal in smuggled or prohibited goods; to neglect the duties of their station and calling; to gratify their pride, at the expense of common honesty, by living above their income; or to indulge in needless expenses, to the injury of their families, and of their ability to do good in acts of charity and benevolence.

The religious government of the tongue was likewise a subject on which he insisted very strongly, I mean as to its regulation respecting the private concerns and character of our neighbour. Nothing seemed to hurt him more than to hear any one take pleasure in speaking ill of others, or retail slanderous reports to their disadvantage; and he would frequently stop them abruptly, by observing to them, that "the roots of the tongue lie very deep;" or, with that remark, "I seldom see a fault in another, but I look for two in myself, and they generally are not far to seek."

In the distribution of his time, and the regulation

of his family, he observed the most exact order and regularity ; not merely on a principle of prudence and the better conducting of his business, but through a religious sense of the importance of his time and substance, as talents received from God, and of which he was sensible he must give an account.

His dress, furniture, and mode of living, exhibited a model of the most primitive simplicity, so that in visiting him, you might imagine yourself a guest with one of the ancient Fathers rather than with a divine of the eighteenth century : nor let any suppose that this proceeded from covetousness, or a base love of money ; it arose from a conviction of the exceeding evil of the waste of his talent, a disapprobation of this sumptuous manner of living, too fashionable amongst the clergy, and a conscientious care that he might have it in his power to relieve the wants of others.

In the private duties of the closet he was diligent and unremitted. These he considered, not only as a discharge of duty, but as indispensably necessary for the life and support of his soul, and as a principal means of maintaining intercourse with God, and gaining those daily supplies of divine grace, which he stood in continual need of as a Minister and as a Christian.

His caution and great candour respecting others, were also very remarkable, and highly worthy of imitation ; and though he was firmly established in the Gospel-faith of salvation by Jesus Christ alone ; yet was he ever ready to make great allowances for men's different views of things, and distinguished with much care between an error of the head, and one of the heart.

His curate one day asking him what he thought of one of his people, whether the person was a real Christian or not ; he seemed to take no notice. Some days afterwards he called him aside, and said to him—" Sir,

you asked me the other day what I thought of the state of A. B. and would probably be surprised that I gave you no reply ; but it was not through inattention. It is a point which requires much serious consideration, before we determine on the state of any person"—and then proceeded to give his sentiments with his usual candour.

This is but one instance, out of many, which might be produced, in proof of that Christian deliberation which he used in his determinations in general, and of his particular and close attention to the cardinal grace of 1 Cor. xiii. with which few were better acquainted than Mr. Adam.

The same grace of true Christian charity was eminently displayed by him in times of provocation. He was naturally of a very high and warm spirit, and evidently of very quick feelings in cases of this nature. But this served only the more fully to display the power of that divine grace which gave him such happy victory over his passions, that his meekness and humility were the admiration of all that knew him. A clergyman who lived in his family above six years, and had the opportunity of seeing him at all times, and in variety of circumstances, writes of him thus : " I don't recollect ever to have seen his temper ruffled above once or twice in all the time that I lived with him. When any thing happened of a trying or provoking kind, he used to turn upon his heel, and say nothing, 'till he had thought it over, and examined whether there was indeed a just cause for anger or not."

But this conquest of himself was not attained to but by hard conflicts, and in the exercise of much labour, watchfulness, and prayer. He was forced to dispute his ground inch by inch, and would often say, "if ever grace was grafted on a crab-stock, it is surely in me."

In this connexion it would be injustice to omit his forgiveness of injuries. That which was formerly said of Archbishop Cranmer, "Do my Lord of Canterbury a shrewd turn, and you make him your friend as long as you live," might with the greatest truth be applied to our worthy author. And often would he requite the ingratitude and rudeness of an ignorant and perverse parishioner, by taking occasion to do him some kind office as soon as possible.

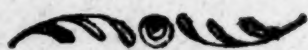
But among all the graces which adorned his Christian profession, his patience and resignation under the afflicting hand of God, were most remarkable. In these he was peculiarly eminent, and exceeded by few that we have either seen or read of. It pleased God to afflict him, for many years before his death, with a disorder of a very peculiar and trying nature. But through the whole, the power of divine grace shone with a most striking splendour, while nothing but meekness and submission were to be seen in his deportment, and adoration and thankfulness heard from his lips.

His manner was rather peculiar, but it was easy to perceive it to be the result of much conscientious thought. He spake little; but what he said was full of that weight and gravity which bespoke the Philosopher and the Christian. Yet this his taciturnity, proceeding also from great natural reserve, must be considered as one of his chief defects, and had its unhappy influence in preventing his greater usefulness, both amongst his people, and his friends in general; and he himself both saw, and often lamented it in this view.

Upon the whole, as a minister, he was conscientious, diligent, and regular; faithfully attentive to his ministry, filling up his office with great integrity, and adorning it by a suitable life and conversation.

As a Christian, he was humble, serious, and de-

vout ; a sincere follower of his great master ; sound in the faith and hope of the Gospel, and truly exemplary in every good word and work : An affectionate husband, steady friend, kind neighbour, and indulgent master : And, to sum all in the words of the worthy clergyman, in his letter before referred to, " If his real character could be held forth, it would well deserve an attentive review and imitation. And though it may be expected that some may think light of it, and others sneer at it, as too precise and primitive, I doubt not he will one day appear great, and be numbered among the worthiest who will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

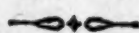


ANECDOTE.

I remember some years ago to have buried a corpse.—In the extremity of the audience that surrounded me I discerned a female, wrinkled with age, and bending with weakness ; one hand held a motherless grand-child, the other wiped away her tears, with the corner of a woollen apron.—I pressed towards her when the service was closed.—“ Have you lost a friend ?”—She heaved a melancholy sigh—“ The Lord bless her memory !”—I soon found the deceased had allowed her for several years six-pence per week ! O my God ! is it possible that the appropriation of a sum so inconsiderable, may cause a widow's heart to sing for joy, and save the child of the needy !—Who would waste a *six-pence* ! Who would indulge themselves in extravagance ! Who would not deny themselves, to be able to secure the blessing of them that are ready to perish !

Jay's Life of Winter.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE.



THOUGHTS ON HOSEA viii. 10.

*I have written to him the great things of my law,
but they were counted as a strange thing.*



THE law of God, to which the prophet refers, is the whole system of religion, as contained in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, then extant. The first of these were written by Moses, and the rest, by the prophets in succession, for the benefit of the children of Israel. In them was revealed the nature of that worship which is acceptable to the Most High, and the manner in which a sinner might obtain pardon and salvation. Hence to obey God's law is equivalent to the practice of true religion; and to forsake the law, in the language of the inspired writers, is to embrace a false religion.

To this law, thus extensively understood, belonged,

1. The various precepts of Moses; namely, the moral law contained in the ten commandments, and other parts of Scripture, including all the duties which every rational creature owes to God and his neighbour: As also, the ceremonial law, or the rites of external worship, relating to priests, sacrifices, sabbaths, feast-days, washings, and the whole of the temple service: And the political law, which regulates their intercourse with each other, as members of society.

2. The doctrine of Messiah, the promised seed of the woman, in whom all the nations of the earth were

to be blessed. He is the substance of the ceremonial law, and the great subject of whom the prophet spake, to whom the pious Israelites were directed for a better righteousness than their own, and through whose atonement, shadowed forth in their sacrifices, they could only obtain acceptance with God here, and the enjoyment of everlasting blessedness hereafter.

Since the days of the prophet, Messiah has been born of a woman—born under the law. He has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself on the cross, and brought in everlasting righteousness. The ceremonial institutions of the Jewish economy, having received their fulfilment, have been abolished; like shadows they have passed away, when the good thing to come signified by them, had appeared. The Jewish polity has been annihilated in the ruin of their city and nation, for their rejection of Messiah. The law of God, then, as written to us, excludes the Jewish rites of worship, and their peculiar civil ordinances. All the moral duties enjoined on that people, and all the directions relative to Messiah, are still in force. These are revealed in a more perfect and clear manner, in the Scriptures of the New Testament, which is an explanation and confirmation of those of the Old.

The whole system of religion, therefore, as contained in these Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, save those religious ceremonies and political regulations, which are abolished, constitutes at present the law of God. To it belong,

1. Directions concerning the worship of God in public and private.
2. Exhortations to faith and repentance.
3. Instructions as to the manner of acceptance with God, through Christ.
4. Commandments to live godly in Christ Jesus.

5. Promises to obedience, and threatenings to disobedience.

This law, in every part of it, both as it respected the nation of Israel, and as it regards us Christians, is not of human, but divine, origin. God hath written it—it is his work. Part he is said to have written with his own hand, viz. the ten commandments, on two tables of stone. These commandments he spake audibly unto Israel from Mount Sinai, so that their authority could not be doubted. The rest of the law was written by his servants, according to his direction, and under the guidance of his Holy Spirit. Thus at different times, Moses was commanded to write in a book what the Lord dictated. Thus also, God commanded Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Habakkuk, and John the Evangelist: “All Scriptures is given by inspiration from God; for holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

Thus God hath written to his ancient people and to us, his law, which contains no mean or trifling matters, but great things, matters of the utmost moment, of infinite importance to us. Hath God revealed any thing to his creatures? we may conclude that it must be worthy of himself. He is a Great Being—King of kings, and Lord of lords; glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, and doing wonders. His law is like himself, the transcript of his perfections, stamped with his image. Every part of it is great; i. e. it is excellent—it is interesting—it is divine. It unfolds to us the eternal council of peace between the Father and the Son, concerning the world of mankind. We learn from it, the origin of all things; who made them, and how he made them. God created the heavens and the earth, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, out of nothing. The works of his hand, we read, he

still upholds and governs, directing them steadily to that end, for which he made them. Here we have recorded the narrative of stupendous miracles, wrought for the promotion of the divine glory among men. Affecting providences are detailed, in which the faithfulness of God to his people, and his wrath towards the ungodly, are strikingly illustrated. Doctrines are revealed, sublime in their nature ; perfectly consistent with the principles of right reason, yet exceeding the powers of man to discover, and practical in their effects ; changing the heart, and reforming the life. The way of salvation through a crucified Redeemer, and all the benefits which he has purchased for those who believe in him ; such as calling, pardon, acceptance, cleansing, adoption, and perseverance, are fully made known to us. Prophecies delivered ages back, are here preserved, for the confirmation of faith, and the conviction of unbelief. Life and immortality is brought to light, and the glorious reward of righteousness, together with the awful punishments of wickedness, are unveiled to view. Are not all these particulars truly great things—important matters ?

Even the positive institutions of religion, those lesser parts of the law, display the same excellence ; as “ the eagle, wonderful in his soarings, shows in his very stoops, the power of his wing.” The establishment of a Gospel ministry ; attendance on public and private worship ; observance of the Lord's day in a holy manner ; administration of the sacraments, and exercise of spiritual discipline ; all lead our attention to salvation by the blood of the cross, and teach us to die unto sin, and walk before God in newness of life. They all, by the divine blessing, promote growth in Christian knowledge, and in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Not less important in significancy and moral influence, thus are the rites of the Gospel, than those of the law were.

Truly, then, the things of religion are great : great in themselves, and great in comparison with other things. Where will you find so clear, consistent, and rational an account of creation and providence, and salvation for sinners, as is contained in the law of God? In the writings of pagan sages, if you except some few moral precepts, you meet with the eternity of matter, the formation of the world by chance, the superintendence of fortune over the concerns of men, and a most wretched perversion of the law of nature in many of its most important parts. Among modern philosophers,

“ Some drill and bore
The solid earth, and from the strata there,
Extract a register ; by which we learn,
That HE who made it, and revealed its date
To Moses, was mistaken in its age.
Some, more acute and industrious still,
Contrive creation ; travel nature up
To the sharp peak of her sublimest height,
And tell us whence the stars ; why some are fixed,
And planetary some ; what gave them first
Rotation ; from what fountain flowed their light.”

The different theories of the earth, as they are called, which have been invented to account for the existence of all things, stamped as they are with absurdity, fully prove that these men, on scientific subjects, will “strain at a gnat and swallow a camel,” rather than accredit revelation. Not wiser are they on the subject of providence ; accounting for every fact in the natural and moral world, wholly by the agency of second causes ; as if second causes could produce so much harmony and order, without the power and wisdom of a supreme and infinite first cause animating and directing them. On the subject of duties, they call good evil, and evil good ; confounding the eternal distinctions between virtue and vice ; es-

tablishing every man's own ideas the standard of right and wrong. As to the pardon of sin and acceptance with God, wretched teachers are they. Rejecting the only name given under heaven among men, whereby they can be saved, they leave us the sport of doubts about the future, dissatisfied with every thing, and believing nothing.

How pre-eminent in consistency, in agreeableness to fact, in moral excellence, in transforming power, is the law of God!—the whole system of religion as contained in the Bible. What it reveals is great; what it commands is great; what it promises is great; what it threatens is great. Every thing in it is great, grand, dignified, and divine. All who receive it in sincerity, are ennobled by it. Its object is to exalt Jehovah, and to make wretched sinners happy in life, and blessed in eternity. And yet this law was rejected, slighted, contemned, and violated by the ten tribes. Its great things were counted by them as a strange thing.

The meaning of the expressions used, will be sufficiently illustrated in the following particulars: First, Men count this law a strange thing when they consider it as no way regarding them. Thus it was to Israel like a foreign law. They viewed it as the law of Judah, but not of Israel. Its penalties, of course, did not, according to their ideas, reach them, or its promises affect them. Thus men still count it a strange thing, when they do not feel its importance to themselves, nor realize the danger of disobedience unto it. They hear it preached, and perhaps read it too, without examining themselves by it; considering it addressed to others, and not to themselves. The great things it contains, in their eyes, are too abstract, too far removed from the common occurrences of life, to have any influence on human happiness. They do not apply them to their

own cases—do not bring them home to their consciences, as matters in which they themselves are personally interested. Thus they remain careless about the laws, and totally negligent of suitable improvement under it.

Secondly ; Men count this law a strange thing, when they remain ignorant of it, with full opportunity of knowing it. This is a necessary consequence of the preceding remarks. They who regard religion as a thing foreign to them, will soon become perfect strangers to it. Thus it was with the Jews in the days of good Josiah. Under his father's wicked reign, the knowledge of true godliness had almost become extinct. The book of the law had been lost ; but now it was found, and its contents filled the king and his court with consternation. Equally ignorant were the ten tribes, in the days of the prophet Hosea, during the reign of Jeroboam, the son of Joash. Thus men still count it a strange thing, when they do not read it, or attend on its preaching ; when they are unacquainted with its great things, and no way desirous of learning them ; when they are satisfied with a superficial knowledge of religion, and take no pains to increase it ; when they rather lose what they know, than acquire more. If they were as familiar with it as with other matters, they would not be so ignorant of it. In all cases, they who know not the law of the Lord, count it a strange thing : for a wayfaring man, though a fool, may understand it if he will study it.

Thirdly ; Men count this law a strange thing, when they do not love it or esteem it. Thus Israel cast away the law of the Lord of Hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. What we know not we cannot love, nor can we esteem that in which we feel not some personal interest. They who realize the value of God's law, and understand it well, count

it their greatest delight. Oh, how I love thy law ! said the Psalmist ; and with him will all believers join. They who cannot, are strangers to its excellence, its preciousness ; and for them, as long as they continue thus, its great things are written in vain. Seeing, they do not see them ; and hearing, they do not hear them. Their hearts are alienated from God, and their affections placed on what he hates and condemns. They do not approve of his law—object to some parts—doubt of others ; receive this, and reject that ; are pleased with a part, and dislike the rest. Alas ! they count it a strange thing. They feel no attachment to it—find no pleasure in it.

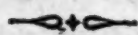
Finally ; Men count this law a strange thing when they do not obey it. Did they love it, they would fulfil it ; but because they hate it, they first cavil with it, and then reject it. These be thy gods, O Israel, said Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which brought thee up out of Egypt ; and the people worshipped the calves at Bethel and Dan, though God had forbidden idolatry, and declared that HE brought them up, out of the house of bondage. Thus men still act directly contrary to the will of God as revealed in his word. Some, whilst they profess to know God, in works deny him ; being abominable and disobedient. They corrupt his worship ; abandon his ordinances ; disobey his commandments ; and attempt to unite God and mammon : others, not a few, wholly reject this law, loving darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. They consider it a cunningly devised fable, which deserves no credit, nor respect.

These are some of the ways, in which men count the law of God, and its great things, a strange thing. Dreadful folly to do so ! Aggravated crime ! How justly were the ten tribes punished ! And all they who act like them, may look for the divine displeasure.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN'S MAGAZINE.

CHURCH OF GOD.

N^o. XIV.



Officers, &c.

WE have stated the *first* requisite in a Christian minister to be piety; i. e. according to the large theological sense of the term, a principle of true religion, or devotedness of heart and life to the love and service of God in Christ.

We have stated his *next* qualification to be *aptness to teach*. This we have shown to contain,

(1.) A good natural capacity; or such a degree of native talent as is susceptible of the proper cultivation.

Some who have accompanied us thus far, will stop short here, and discover a willingness to dispense with acquisitions which were formerly considered as essential to a well-ordered ministry. "Piety," they say, "will keep a man straight upon the main articles of truth; and strength of mind, though rough and unpolished, will enable him to impart them to others in a plain but impressive manner. This," they will add, "is vastly superiour to the drowsy discourse of hundreds who have been through college, have studied divinity, and pass for great scholars."

We protest, once for all, against learned dulness. Little as we delight in solecisms and uncouthness, we

will pardon the maulings of Priscian's* head by the club of untutored power; we shall esteem ourselves repaid for an injury to syntax, or for a rugged illustration, by nature's pathos and vigour; when we should lose our patience with solemn insipidity, or doze under the influences of a leaden diploma; nor deem it any recompense for the loss of our time, that we were put learnedly to sleep. Yet, bad as this is, it is still worse to suffer the insipidity without the poor consolation of some literature to qualify it—an affliction of much more frequent occurrence than the other.

But by what sort of artifice do men cozen their understanding into such argumentation as this?—"Talent without education is better than stupidity with it; therefore, talent ought not to be educated!!" Here is a colt of excellent points and mettle; He is worth a score of you dull, blundering jades, that have been in harness ever since they were able to draw; therefore, he will do very well without breaking! It is surprising that so many, otherwise discreet persons, will maintain that to be wise and good in the Church of God, which they know to be absurd and mischievous in every thing else. In fact, talent, instead of being exempted from the necessity of cultivation, is alone worth the trouble, and needs cultivation in proportion to its strength. Talents are born, knowledge and skill are acquired. God creates the one; he has left the other to be obtained by experience and industry. No talent can coin facts; and without facts it will run to waste.—Without information it has no materials to work upon; and without discipline it will work wrong. The

* PRISCIAN, a famous old grammarian. Hence one who violates the rules of grammar, is said to *break Priscian's head*.

power of doing evil is in exact proportion to the power of doing good. Petty minds produce petty harms and petty benefits. The errors of great minds are great errors, and draw after them deep, wide, and lasting consequences. It is of unutterable moment that they be set right in the beginning. This, in so far as depends upon human exertion, is the province of cultivation, which, of course, makes the (2.) Part, of "aptness to teach."

What ought it to embrace in a minister of Jesus Christ? We may distribute it into two branches; the *first* consisting in literary acquirement; the *second*, in intellectual and moral discipline.

When we consider, that the Scriptures are written in languages which have not been spoken for ages—that they contain a succinct epitome of human history, in reference to the plan of grace, from the beginning to the end of time: going backward to the origin of nations, and forward to their extinction: marking, by the sure word of prophecy, the various fates of various people, as well as the principal dispensations of providence toward the Church—that they relate events which cannot be vindicated against plausible objection, without painful research into the phenomena of our globe—that they are full of allusions to the works of God and of man—that they exhibit human character under all its varieties, intellectual and moral; individual and social—that their illustrations of truth, and formulas of speech are borrowed from objects equally strange to our habits and conceptions; from the face of the country; from the soil; from the climate; from the governments; from the idolatry; from the literature; from the state of domestic society; from the manners of the East—that the language of prophecy is wholly peculiar; being a system of symbols, which, though as certain in themselves, and as reducible to fixed laws of interpretation as any alphabetical language

whatever, are perfectly unintelligible without the study of those laws——When we consider these things, it is impossible not to perceive that the study of the Bible allows of the widest range of learning; and that without a respectable portion of it no man can “rightly divide the word of truth.”

Acquaintance with the *original tongues* is indispensable.

God has delivered his word to us in Hebrew and Greek, which being now, as they are commonly called, *dead* languages, are not liable to the fluctuations of a living one. These are the ultimate and the unalterable standard of truth, by which every doctrine must eventually be tried. Excellent versions the Churches have; versions, from which all that is to make us “wise unto salvation,” may be learned by the humblest peasant or labourer, as certainly as by the accomplished scholar; versions, undoubtedly susceptible of improvement; but which the licentious spirit of the times gives us very dubious promise of replacing with better. *Timeo Danaos*—We invariably suspect these *amended Bibles*, which the Iscariot-bands of professed Christianity are labouring, on both sides of the Atlantic, to thrust into the hands of the unlettered and the simple*.

* There is a late most audacious attempt to explain away the *whole gospel* of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; absolutely stripping it, with the single exception of the doctrine of the resurrection, of every principle which makes it “glad tidings” to a sinner; substituting, in the room of “redemption by the blood of Christ,” a barren morality, little, if any better than that of the Pagans, who were “without Christ, without hope, and without God in the world†;” and straining into the “cup of salvation” the distilled venom of Socinian blasphemy. This fatal draught is handed about with incessant assiduity, and put to the lips of the unthink-

† Eph. ii. 12.

But the excellence of versions does not supersede the necessity of studying the originals. The very fact, that God has preserved them by a care hardly short of miraculous, would, of itself, establish our position. Why were they committed to dead languages at all? Why thus carefully preserved amidst the ruined literature of the world, and the moral midnight of the “dark ages?” To be thrown, neglected, into a corner? To be kept as a curiosity to feed the worms, and amuse the antiquary? To be decried by gabbling impertinence; or give the ministers of religion an opportunity of displaying their sense and spirit, by treating as unworthy of *their* study, and as beneath *their* notice, those *original* volumes which their God has not thought it beneath him to consign, for their use, to the safeguard of his wonder-working providence? For ourselves, we doubt not that his chief design in permitting the Hebrew and Greek tongues to die away; in protecting the remnants of classical literature, and causing it to revive, was that his blessed book might be read in the original; and that his Church might be able to assert and maintain his truth inviolate, by having direct access to the fountains themselves. And as little do we doubt that the cry which modern times, and especially modern infidels have raised against classical literature, and in which some Christians and Christian ministers have unwittingly joined, is a deep, though to many an unsuspected stratagem of hell, to bring the original Scriptures into gradual disuse; and, then, by dis-

ing, that they may “sleep the sleep of death.” All this under the modest and respectful guise of, “*an improved version of the New Testament.*” The precedent of such treachery was set long ago. Its author is “gone to his own place.” But the “improved version,” with its accompaniments, show that his treason has not perished with him. “Betray ye the Son of man with a kiss?”

crediting the versions, to involve Christianity in embarrassment and shame.

Independently on the argument to be derived from the extraordinary preservation of the sacred records, there are other demonstrations of the necessity of studying them in the original.

All human works partake of human infirmity ; and are marked with characters of the age in which they are achieved. The remark is universally applicable, because the fact is universally true ; and must be so, as it involves a contradiction, or something like one, to suppose it otherwise. The state of the sciences, the style of the fine arts, the very form of handwriting, at a particular period, are stamped with characters by which the date of performances in them can frequently be ascertained, with sufficient precision, many centuries afterwards. If a man write a book which has familiar and frequent references to different subjects of human knowledge, these references must be regulated by the general state of that knowledge ; and if it labour under any material defects, must participate in those defects. No enormity of genius, no distance of views and discoveries, like those of Bacon and Newton, beyond the sphere of his contemporaries, will enable him to escape, in *all* things, the common imperfection.

Now the best versions of the Bible are but human works. Stupendous works, indeed, are some of them, all things considered, but still human. They bear strong traces of the state of knowledge upon many subjects at the time when they were made. The effect is, that innumerable passages of Scripture are incorrectly rendered. The vast extension of physical science, of acquaintance with Eastern customs, and even of philology, within the last fifty years, has established a multitude of Scriptural facts ; has cleared up a multitude of obscurities ; has recti-

fied misrenderings and misinterpretations which no integrity or perspicacity could once avoid; has decisively refuted the objections of enemies. The process is still going on, and will continue to go on. For it is the wonderful property of the book of God, that it has never yet been detected in a mistake, even when speaking on those subjects of which the knowledge was either partially or not at all possessed by the penmen. Its enemies have often charged it with ignorance and error; but a closer investigation has invariably proved the ignorance and the error to be their own*.

* VOLTAIRE, more malignant than CELSUS, more impudent, if possible, than PAINE, and more witty, past peradventure, than all the rest of the goodly brotherhood put together, lost no opportunity of reviling the Scriptures. And if a plump, round lie were now and then necessary to his purpose, as he was not over-nice in his means, he did not permit the want of it to interrupt his "useful labours." Once on a time he made a grand discovery, which was to dock off from the age of the book of Proverbs a handful of centuries, and so prove the book itself to be spurious. He found this good fortune in Chap. xxiii. 31. which the Latin Vulgate renders, "cum splenduerit in vitro color ejus," i. e. "when its colour," (wine,) "is brilliant in the glass." Now, drinking-glasses, being, according to Mons. Voltaire, a "very recent invention†;" and being mentioned in this text, it follows that the book of Proverbs is *still more recent*, or it could not have mentioned them. Unhappily for the "grand" philosopher, the Hebrew original says nothing about *glass*; but simply "cup," so that all Mr. V's. argument can prove, at the utmost, is, that the Vulgate translation is later than Solomon; a most rare discovery! See an admirable work entitled *Lettres de quelques Juifs a M. de Voltaire*. Tom. III. p. 324. a performance which plays with the flippant infidel even as grimalkin playeth with an unlucky mouse; and of which the strong sense, superiour learning, grave irony, and blistering wit, threw Voltaire into as great a rage, as Beattie's "*Essay on Truth*," threw the gentle

† Dict. Philos. Art. Salomon.

But it is always difficult, and often impracticable, to push our advantages without a knowledge of the original. Under such a privation, the expounder or the advocate of revealed truth must trudge painfully on, yielding a blind credence to the assertion of another; and if, upon any occasion, the fidelity or the competency of his guide should happen to be suspected by himself, or impeached by others, he has no escape from the misery of suspense, or the shame of defeat. But when his acquaintance with the original enables him to measure all criticisms and glosses by that authoritative test, he can take his ground with a promptitude, and keep it with a confidence, second in value only to the ground itself.

Again. All living languages fluctuate. Old words become obsolete; new ones are coined; and of those which remain in vogue, multitudes gradually change their meaning, so as to convey in popular and even classical usage, ideas very different from what they expressed a century before. This fluctuation is extensive and rapid nearly in proportion to the varieties of industry, the competitions of skill, and the intercourse of nations. Eastern versions of the Bible suffer the least. The Eastern habits and languages being, for obvious reasons, more stable than those of the West. But from the changes which have passed upon the languages of Europe, the vernacular versions, understood according to the present acceptation of their terms, frequently put into the mouth of the sacred writer propositions most

David Hume. The point of their satire remains unblunted, and their reply to Voltaire unanswerable; notwithstanding the epithet of "pedant" applied to their author by Mons. Voltaire's distressed editor, fortified, too, by a philosophic quibble. Vid. *Oeuvres de VOLTAIRE*, Tom. XLIII. p. 131. 8vo, 1785.

foreign to his sense ; and lead the unwary reader into false and hurtful conclusions. Strong examples might be adduced from our English Bible ; but our limits forbid the detail.

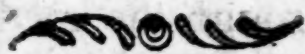
Further. The art of printing has multiplied books, we had almost said, into a nuisance. The multiplication of books has, in its turn, vitiated the art of printing. It has sunk from an employment for talents and erudition, into a mere mechanical craft. The voracious demand for books rendered this unavoidable. United with the boundless circulation of the Scriptures, with the quick succession of editions, and with the low price at which the copies must be furnished for common use, it has increased the number of typographical errors beyond all count. Some of these are of such a nature as to pervert the meaning of the passage, yet to preserve grammar and sense, and to defy correction from the context. Let us mention a curious instance. In 1 Cor. vi. 4. The apostle says, “ If ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are *least* “esteemed in the Church !” One of the editions has it, “ set them to judge who are *best* esteemed.” A glance at the original detects the mistake. But, setting this aside, no man could tell with certainty, whether we should read “ least ” or “ best ; ” and a hundred critical arguments might have been mustered to show that the wrong reading is the better.

Besides ; there are many things, and those of importance, in every language, which disappear, or rather never appear in a translation. We know that this is doubted, denied, and even laughed at by many. We cannot help it. It is the privilege of ignorance to laugh ; of insincerity, to misrepresent ; and of capriciousness, to doubt. Leaving them in the possession of their several honours, we combine the suffrages of all candid scholars. There is a colouring, a viva-

city, a vigour, a comprehension, a pungency of idiom, a felicity of reference in the structure of a word or the peculiarity of a phrase, which never can be transferred. There is a clear opening of sense to an eye practised in the original, which a thick cloud mantles the moment it passes into a version. There is a precision of construction obvious to a scholar of taste, the causes of which are more a matter of feeling than of argument; and though perfectly decisive, are too delicate to be perceived by the uncultivated sense. Yet, in their effects, they tinge and beautify the whole discussion of a subject.

In conclusion. The adversaries of evangelical truth and hope, are much addicted to the practice of assailing our faith through the medium of criticism. What they want in solidity, they make up in boldness and in show. When you press them with the *subject*, they will criticise all your heavy matter away into the thin air of *metaphor*; little concerned if, in following up their principle, they criticise God himself into a figure of speech. When you press them with a plain text, they will flout at the translation, abuse the translators, and hear nothing but the *original*. When you produce the original, as little to their comfort as the translation, they smell a corruption in the text, and it must be purged by *manuscripts*; any manuscript being good enough to amend or discard an *orthodox* expression. When the manuscripts are rebellious, which commonly happens, unphilosophical Christians as they are, they must receive the castigation of *critical acumen*, i. e. the guesses of an Arian or Socinian mender of the Bible, are to sway our consciences in the question of heaven and eternal life; or we are to be degraded from the rank of *rational* believers to the pitiable plight of bigots, fanatics, and simpletons.

To repress this effrontery, and to shield the community from the assaults of this rabid fury; as well as to meet the several exigencies enumerated above, there is no effectual means but the living teacher skilled in the original tongues, and imbued with the correspondent learning. The times awfully demand it. And if such employment does not require a separate profession for the ministry, and able and educated men in it, there is not, and cannot be, a human occupation to which every human being is not always and every where equally competent.

**SELECT SENTENCE.**

Some men speak much of the imitation of Christ, and following his example; and it were well if we could see more of it really in effect. But no man shall ever become like unto him by bare imitation of his actions, without that view, or intuition of his glory, which alone is accompanied with a transforming power to change them into the same image.

Owen.

R E V I E W.

ART. IV.

The excellence of the Church: a Sermon, preached at the consecration of Trinity Church, Newark, New-Jersey, by the Right Reverend Bishop Moore, on Monday, May 21, A. D. 1810. By John Henry Hobart, D. D. An Assistant Minister of Trinity Church, New-York. Published by request. New-York, T. & J. Swords, pp. 41. 8vo.

(Continued from p. 459.)

IT is not the intrinsic value of this discourse, that induced us to pay particular attention to it. Its importance, in our estimation, is derived from circumstances of another description. The station which Dr. Hobart occupies, as a minister of Trinity Church, and as the foremost of those who have stood forth to assure the world, that *they* possess *learning and talents adequate to the defence of the Episcopal cause*, confers upon himself and his writings an importance, in public estimation, which it does not become us to overlook. We take an interest in every thing which can influence the religious opinions of men; and we are encouraged to hope, from the improvement which Dr. Hobart has made under the hands of the critics, that we shall be able to render him, in the course of time, at least consistent with himself, and a little more cautious in his assertions.

The sermon under review, furnishes us with some foundation for this hope. In page 23, where he ex-

hibits the proof of the excellence of the prelatical ministry, he rests his cause upon two arguments, 1. *Inability* to account for a change in antiquity, from Presbytery to prelacy; and, 2, the supposed *prelatical powers* of Timothy, Titus, and the angels of the seven Churches of Asia. He must, accordingly, have given up as untenable, the arguments, formerly urged with great confidence, from the three orders of the Jewish priesthood; from the ministry of Christ, the twelve, and the seventy; from the ministry of the apostles, elders, and deacons; and from the prelatical powers of James at Jerusalem. So far, good! The Doctor now presents the hierarchy resting upon two pillars; and these are not more strong than those which have already given way. The first, Doctor Hobart's *inability* to account for a change, is an *argumentum ab ignorantia*. It may last until he shall be induced to acquire for himself a knowledge of antiquity, from the original sources of information; and cease to trust to misquoted and misapplied passages, found in the controversial writings of men, interested in the defence of the English establishment. A knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, than which, nothing better becomes a divine, is the only effectual remedy for the opinion that Timothy and Titus, and the Asian angels were diocesan bishops. But this is not the place for the argument.

Dr. H.'s text is Psalm xlviii. 12, 13. and it is used by way of accommodation. It should have been the first care of the preacher to do justice to his text, by explaining its meaning. For it is essential to correct sermonising, that the "mind of the Spirit," in that part of the word which is selected as the subject of discourse, be perspicuously declared; otherwise, the preacher incurs the charge of *handling the word of God deceitfully*. Every workman who needeth not to be ashamed, must know how to divide

aright the word of truth. Regardless, however, of the rule which requires that the subject of the sermon should be found in the text, Dr. H. undertakes to discuss the excellence of his own Church—"of *our* Church." This is an offence against the laws of the pulpit; the more inexcusable, as it does not at all appear perfectly obvious, without explanation, that David ever contemplated the application of the text, either to the "39 articles," or to the "book of common prayer."

In the bold designs of genius, there is always something which extorts our admiration; and did we not feel some veneration for the word of truth, we should allow Dr. H. the praise of daring enterprise. It is assuredly a more arduous task to prove the superior excellence of the Episcopal Church, than to illustrate the duty recommended in the text by the king of Israel.

As we are bound to accompany the preacher, we must now, like him, take our leave of the text, and attend to his description of

The excellence of our Church

In her doctrine,

In her ministry,

In her ordinances and worship.

The discussion of these three topics, occupies twenty-five pages of the sermon; and sixteen of them are devoted to the doctrine. It is the principal design of the preacher, both in the sermon and the notes, to prove that the doctrine of the Church of England is not Calvinistic. Upon this ground he rests the proof of its excellence. He assumes as the basis of his reasoning, that Calvinism is a very bad thing; and that whatsoever is opposed to it must be good.

His argument reduced into the form of syllogism would appear as follows:

Whatever is not Calvinistic must be excellent,
The articles of the Church of England are not Calvinistic,

Ergo, the Church is excellent in her doctrine.

Dr. Hobart does not even attempt to give us any other proof of the excellence of the thirty-nine articles, than their anticalvinistic tendency ; for his *practical points* are of the same cast with his *theoretical opinions*. Although we are not prepared to admit, that whatever is opposed to the doctrines usually called Calvinistic, must be true ; yet we shall not attempt to disprove the major proposition of the above syllogism. But neither are we prepared to jump with the preacher into his conclusion. We dispute the truth of the minor proposition. We believe, that the doctrine of the articles, although not so explicitly declared as the doctrine of the Confession of Faith, is, so far as the Calvinistic and Arminian controversies are concerned, the common faith of the Reformed Churches. In order that the reader may judge for himself, we shall, after making a few remarks, present him with the words of the Articles and those of the Confession of Faith side by side. He will then perceive the doctrine of both to be the very same, only more obscurely expressed by the Episcopal Church. This difference is readily accounted for. Presbyterians are plain people. We write in order to be understood. Our object is to exclude, not convey a double meaning.

Dr. H. acknowledges, that if the *Articles* of the Church be Calvinistic, the *ministry* of their Church *merit* reproach. "*Churchmen are continually told, that the Articles of the Church are Calvinistic. The assertion, therefore, ought to be refuted, in order that her clergy may be vindicated from the reproach*.*"

* Page 13.

Should we succeed in proving that these Articles are Calvinistic, the Doctor himself, not we, must be considered as the defamer. He admits, that their clergy, in such case cannot be vindicated. Far be it from us to dispute the correctness of the admission.

The Thirty-nine Articles were formed by a convocation, in the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, from the forty-two Articles of Edward VI. originally drawn up by Cranmer and Ridley. The original compilers, and those who reviewed and adopted them, were all agreed in sentiment about the doctrines of grace, with Mr. Calvin and the other reformers on the continent. This continued to be the case with the Church of England until the time of Archbishop Laud. To him, his biographer, Dr. Heylin ascribes the praise of rendering fashionable in England the Arminian creed*. Heylin understood the Articles otherwise than Dr. H. explains them. Although himself an Arminian, he says of the 17th article,—“ In this definition there are these
 “ things to be observed, 1. That predestination doth
 “ pre-suppose a curse or state of damnation in which
 “ *all mankind* was presented to the sight of God. 2.
 “ That it is an act of his from everlasting. 3. That
 “ he founded it, and resolved for it in the man and
 “ mediator Christ Jesus, both for the purpose and
 “ performance. 4. That it was of *some special ones*
 “ *alone*, elect, called forth, and reserved in Christ,
 “ and not *generally extended* to all mankind. 5.
 “ That being thus *elected* in Christ, they *shall be*
 “ *brought* by Christ to everlasting salvation. Leav-
 “ ing reprobation to be gathered upon logical infer-
 “ ences from that which is delivered on the point of
 “ election, for *contrariorum contraria est ratio*†.”

* Cyprianus Anglicus, pages 38, 39. † Introd. p. 20.

Compare this with the words of Dr. Hobart*.
 “ The 17th Article, then, may be interpreted of the election of Christians *in general* to the privileges of the Gospel, all of which will be forfeited if they do not—make their calling and election sure.”—“ The *only election* declared in Scripture, the election of Christians as a collective body to the *privileges of the Gospel*†.”

The truth is, reprobation is necessarily implied in election. What is not *chosen* is *rejected*. If *some* are elected, *others* must be rejected ; and the compilers of the Articles, knowing this, esteemed it unnecessary to express it. One fact puts it beyond dispute that the convocation which formed the Thirty-nine Articles, were as high Predestinarians as ever Calvin was. A few men, at the head of whom was Thomas Talbot, conceived themselves persecuted by the Church, because they did not adopt such decisive terms respecting the decree of reprobation as was then customary. These divines were not Arminian in sentiment, as appears from their petition. They were confessedly a very small number compared with their opponents ; and they supplicate a *toleration* to express their sentiments. The Calvinism of the Church of England, while forming her Articles, must have been high-toned indeed, when a party in the Church must use, in an humble supplication, such words as these : “ That God doth foreknow
 “ and *predestinate* all good and goodness ; but doth
 “ *only* foreknow, and *not* predestinate any evil or
 “ sin.

“ Yet, to their great grief and sorrow, because they
 “ do hold, contrary to a *great number of their brethren*,
 “ *the Protestants*, that God's holy predestination is no
 “ manner of occasion or cause of sin—whereby any

* Introd. p. 20.

† Pages 15. 17.

“ part of mankind shall be predestinate of any unavoidable necessity to commit sin.

“ For this cause, they be esteemed of their brethren, the Protestants, for fautors* of false religion, and are *constrained* hitherto to sustain at their hands the *shameful reproach and infamy of Free-will-men, Pelagians, Papists, Epicures, Anabaptists*, and enemies unto God's *Holy Predestination* and providence.

“ Please it your gracious Fatherhoods, that none of these punishments which the clergy have in their power to execute, shall extend to those who do hold predestination, as is above declared; except it be duly proven, that they maintain, that man, of *his own natural power*, is able to think, will, or work of himself, *any thing* that should in any case *help* or *serve* towards his own salvation, or any part thereof†.”

These petitioners had a better opportunity than either Dr. H. or his oracle, Dr. Lawrence, had of knowing the creed of the Fathers of the Church of England, and they represent it as, not only Calvinistic; but as Calvinism, pushed to an extravagant length, and scarcely granting toleration to moderate Calvinism‡.

These Fathers of the Church, a little time before the convocation assembled to settle the doctrine of the Church, expressed themselves very decidedly in their declaration and confession of faith presented to Queen Elizabeth. Fully expressing their agreement with the Articles of the convocation under King Ed-

* Favourers.

† Strype, An. vol. i. p. 249.

‡ We use the word *Calvinism*, in this connexion, as a generic term; not confining it merely to the sentiments of John Calvin, but as the representative of those doctrines which are the opposite of the *five Arminian points*. To *Calvinism*, properly understood, the epithet extravagant does not belong.

ward, they speak of predestination in these words:—
 “ Seeing some men of late are risen, which do gain-
 “ say and oppugn this truth, we cannot utterly pass
 “ over this matter with silence, both for that the
 “ Holy Ghost doth so often make mention of it in
 “ the Scriptures, especially in St. Paul’s Epistles;
 “ which argueth it to be a thing both fruitful and
 “ profitable to be known. And also being occasion-
 “ ed by the same reason which moved *St. Austin* to
 “ write of this matter of predestination*.”

Did Dr. Hobart know that these men, in a body, so solemnly appealed to Augustine as *their example*, when from the pulpit, he, in the name of the God of truth, taught the people of Newark that they rejected the example of Augustine? And if he did know it—

Dr. H. says, *Her wise and temperate reformers avoided those extreme opinions by which Augustine controverted the Pelagian heresy†*. His reference to *Augustine* was rather unhappy.

Having seen what the *Creed* of the Church of England was, before the adoption of her Thirty-nine Articles, and what it was at the very time of their adoption, we shall also see what it was afterwards until the time of Laud.

The Puritans, jealous Calvinists, never disputed the *orthodoxy* of the Church on these doctrines. Calvin’s Institutions were read publicly in the schools of theology, by order of the convocation. When Barret, in the University of Cambridge, opposed Calvin’s doctrine of predestination, he was examined and condemned, first before the Vice-Chancellor and Heads of colleges, and afterwards before the Archbishop, who enjoined it on him to *confess his ignorance*, and not teach the like doctrines for the fu-

* Strype, Hist. Ref. Vol. I. p. 118.

† Page 21.

ture*. Unhappily, the *ignorance* of Barret, had the Archbishop lived in the present day, would have been found to have crossed the Atlantic!!

In order to suppress effectually every attempt at innovation, and to maintain the Calvinism of the Church, the "Articles of Lambeth" were drawn up. These articles, which are purely Calvinistic, were signed by Archbishop Whitgift, the Bishops of London, and Bangor, the Archbishop of York, and several other learned divines; and they are declared to be, *not new laws, but explications of the doctrine professed in Church of England, and already established by the laws of the land.* These articles are the Church of England's own explanation of her own doctrines. We shall now exhibit in one view the agreement of the Articles with the Confession.

Agreement in Doctrine between the Articles and the Confession.

<i>Confession of Faith.</i>	<i>The 39 Articles Illustrated.</i>	<i>By the Articles of Lambeth.</i>
Chap. VI. 1. <i>Our first parents</i> , being seduced by the subtilty and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. They, being the root of mankind, the <i>guilt</i> of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin, and <i>corrupted nature</i> conveyed to all their posterity. 6. Every sin, doth in its own nature bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.	IX. Original Sin standeth not in the <i>following</i> of Adam, but it is the <i>fault and corruption</i> of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil; so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit; and therefore, in <i>every person</i> , born into this world, it <i>deserveth God's wrath and damnation.</i>	IX. It is not in every one's <i>will</i> and power to be saved.
	X. The condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such, that	VIII. No person <i>can</i> come to Christ, unless it be given him, and

* Heyl. Laud lib. i. Heyl. Presb. p. 343. Neal vol. i. p. 497.

Confession of Faith.	The 39 Articles Illustrated.	By the Articles of Lambeth.
<p>Chap. IX. 3. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost <i>all ability of will</i> to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being <i>altogether averse</i> from that good, and dead in sin, is <i>not able, by his own strength</i>, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.</p>	<p>he <i>cannot</i> turn and prepare himself by his own <i>natural strength</i> and good works, to <i>faith</i> and calling upon God: wherefore we have <i>no power</i> to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the <i>grace of God</i>, by Christ preventing us, that <i>we may have a good will</i>, and working with us, <i>when</i> we have that good will.</p>	<p>unless the Father draw him; and <i>all</i> men are not drawn by the Father that they may come to Christ.</p>
<p>Chap. III. 1. God from all eternity did, by the most <i>wise and holy counsel of his own will</i>, freely, and unchangeably <i>ordain</i> whatsoever comes to pass: yet so, as thereby, neither is God the <i>author of sin</i>, nor is <i>violence offered to the will</i> of the creatures. 3. By the <i>decree</i> of God for the manifestation of his own glory, <i>some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life</i>, and <i>others fore-ordained to everlasting death</i>. 6. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto. 7. The <i>rest</i> of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he <i>extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth</i>, to pass by;</p>	<p>XVII. Predestination to life, is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby, (before the foundations of the world were laid,) he hath constantly <i>decreed</i> by his counsel, secret to us, <i>to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath CHOSEN</i> in Christ <i>OUT of mankind</i>, and to bring them by Christ <i>to everlasting salvation</i>, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore <i>they</i> who be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, <i>be called</i> according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season: <i>they through grace obey the call: they be justified freely: they be made Sons of God</i> by adoption: <i>they be made like the image of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works</i>, and at length, by God's</p>	<p>VII. Saving grace is not communicated to all men.</p> <p>I. That God from eternity has predestinated some persons to life, and reprobated others to death.</p> <p>II. The moving, or efficient cause of predestination to life, is not foreseen faith or good works, or any other commendable quality in the persons predestinated, but the good will and pleasure of God.</p> <p>III. The number of the predestinate is fixed, and cannot be lessened or increased.</p> <p>IV. They who are not predestinated to salvation shall be necessarily condemned for their sins.</p> <p>V. A true, lively, and justifying faith, and the sanctifying influence of the spirit, is not extinguished, nor does it fail, or go off either finally or totally.</p>

<i>Confession of Faith.</i>	<i>The 39 Articles Illustrated.</i>	<i>By the Articles of Lambeth.</i>
and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sins to the praise of his glorious justice.	mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.	

The reader must now judge for himself. We feel no apprehensions from the result. If we are reproached for believing the doctrines of grace, those who take delight in holding them up to scorn, ought to recollect, that in so doing, they revile the Fathers of the Church of England, as well as the Presbyterians. If it be calumny to represent the Church of England as Calvinistic in her doctrine, it is a calumny to be imputed to the whole body of the Protestant clergy, at the accession of Queen Elizabeth; to the very convocation which formed the 39 Articles; to both the universities of Oxford and Cambridge; and to the archbishops and bishops of the Church, who declared her doctrine in the Lambeth Articles. And if it be a salvo to the consciences of modern Episcopalians, when they subscribe the 39 Articles, to bring home the charge of slander upon these dignitaries of the Church, for calling the Articles Calvinistic, why should we disturb them? We do not expect to make Dr. Hobart a Calvinist, but we admire the confidence with which he asserts that the Fathers of the Church of England avoided the expressions of Augustine and Calvin. If it is his principle, let him continue an Arminian confessor of Calvinistic Articles: let him be *Vicar of Bray**.

* The Vicar of Bray, a true *Churchman*, being a Roman Catholic in the reign of Henry VIII.; and a Protestant under Edward VI.; a Papist again under Queen Mary; and a Protestant in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; was reproached for paying so little respect to the solemnities of the religious profession. "Whatever be my religion," replied the vicar, "I have never changed my *principle*," which is, "*to be the Vicar of Bray.*"

[*To be continued.*]

ART. V.

A Collection of Essays on the subject of Episcopacy, which originally appeared in the Albany Centinel, and which are ascribed principally to the Rev. Dr. Linn, the Rev. Mr. Beasley, and Thomas Y. How, Esq. New-York, T. & J. Swords, 1806. pp. 210.



(Continued from p. 394.)

THE sentiment that Prelates are superiour to Presbyters, not by any divine appointment, but merely by the prevalence of custom, extended, among the Latins of the fourth century, much further than Father JEROME. He himself tells us, that the Presbyters of his day not only *thought* so, but *knew* so; and, assuming this as an incontrovertible fact, he grounds upon it an admonition to the Bishops to recollect their origin. “Let them know,” says he, “that they are above the Presbyters more by the custom of the Church, than by any institution of Christ.” Considering him as an honest witness, which is all we ask, and our Episcopal friends will not deny it, he asserts, without qualification, that the

NOTE.—In the last part of our review of these Essays, we very heedlessly fell into a chronological error, of some moment. We stated, that in the fifth century, when Jerome was dead, the Presbyters cowed, &c. Epiphanius did bluster at no ordinary rate, concerning the divine right of Episcopacy. The fact is, that Epiphanius died before Jerome. Of course, our remarks, which are founded upon a contrary supposition, are out of place. The correction of our error is more material to the reader, than any explanation of the manner in which we came to commit it.

Presbyters, i. e. the *mass of Christian clergy*, in his time, were convinced, upon satisfactory proof, that the authority exercised over them by the prelates, limited, as it *then* was, and nothing like what they *now* claim, had no warrant whatever, either in the word of God, or even in apostolical tradition! We repeat it; the great body of the Christian clergy, according to JEROME, were aware of this!! Here, since they call for *facts*, here is a fact more ponderous than all the facts of Episcopacy put together; a fact which there is no frittering away, not even by the force of that vigorous criticism which inverts persons and tenses; transmutes Hebrew verbs into others with which they have no affinity; and changes the very letters of the Hebrew alphabet; so that a ז (*zain*,) is charmed into a נ (*nun*,) and, by this happy metamorphosis, the throat of an ill-conditioned argument escapes from suffocation*!

The testimony of JEROME is corroborated by a contemporary writer of high renown, and an unexceptionable witness in this case, as being himself a Prelate; we mean AUGUSTIN, the celebrated Bishop of Hippo. In a letter to JEROME, he has these remarkable words:—

“ Although, according to the names of honour
 “ which the *usage of the Church has now acquired*,
 “ the office of a Bishop is greater than that of a Pres-
 “ byter, yet in many things Augustin is inferior to
 “ Jerome†.” The sense of this acknowledgment is thus given by a distinguished Prelate of the Church of England, as quoted by Ayton:—“ The office of

* *Churchman's Magazine* for May and June, 1810. on Exod. xxxiii. 19. p. 178.

† *Quamquam secundum honorum vocabula quæ jam Ecclesie usus obtinuit, episcopatus presbyterio major sit; tamen in multis rebus Augustinus Hieronymo minor est. Ep. 19. ad HIERON.*

“ a Bishop is above the office of a Priest, not by the
“ authority of the Scripture, but after the names of
“ honour which, through the custom of the Church,
“ have now obtained*.”

The concession is so clear and ample, that Cardinal BELLARMINE, with all his ingenuity, which was not a little, had no other evasion, than to pretend that these words *are not opposed to the ancient time of the Church*; but to the *time before the Christian Church*; so that the sense is, *before the times of the Christian Church these names, Bishop and Presbyter, were not titles of honour, but of office and age; but now they are names of honour and dignity†.*

Quibbles were scarce when a distressed cardinal could muster up nothing more plausible. As if names of *office* were not names of *dignity*! As if AUGUSTIN, in the very act of paying a tribute of profound respect to JEROME, should think of giving him a bit of grammar lesson about the words “ Bishop” and “ Presbyter!” Verily, the Jesuit was in sore affliction; and had he uttered all his soul, would have exclaimed, like a certain *Arminian* preacher, when hard pressed by Scriptural reasoning;—“ O argument, “ argument! The Lord rebuke thee, argument!

Not much happier than the cardinal, nor much less anxious for such a rebuke to argument than the *Arminian* preacher, will be those critics who shall maintain that AUGUSTIN’S words regard only the *names* of office, without any opinion on the powers or rank of the offices themselves.

1. Such a construction makes the Bishop assert a direct falsehood; the *terms* were in use from the beginning of the Christian Church; and, therefore, could not have been introduced by her customs.

* JEWEL. Defence of his apology, p. 122, 123.

† Jameson’s *Nazianzeni querela*, p. 177, 178.

2. If, by saying that he was superiour to Jerome "according to the names of honour which the Church had obtained by usage," Augustin meant that he enjoyed only a *titular* pre-eminence over that Presbyter, he either insulted Jerome by flouting at him with a lie in the shape of a compliment, or else the Prelates in his day had only a *nominal*, and not a real, power over the Presbyters. The second is contrary to fact; and the first is too absurd for even a troubled cardinal.

If, on the other hand, it be alleged that Augustin, in flattery to Jerome, seemed to claim only a titular precedence, while he was conscious, at the same time, of enjoying an essential superiority, and that by divine right, the disputant will turn himself out of the frying pan into the fire; for he exhibits the venerable father as acting the knave for the pleasure of proving himself to be a fool. So paltry a trick was not calculated to blow dust into the eyes of Jerome. The distinction might appear ingenious to some modern champions of the hierarchy, as it is much in their manner; but could never degrade the pen of the Bishop of Hippo. He is contrasting his *official* superiority over Jerome, with Jerome's *personal* superiority over himself. The former is the superiority of a Bishop over a Presbyter, which, he says, has grown out of the custom of the Church. The compliment to Jerome consists in this—that while the office which sets him above Jerome was the fruit, not of his own deserts, but of the Church's custom, those things which gave Jerome *his* superiority, were personal merits. The compliment is as fine, and its form as delicate, as the spirit which dictated it is magnanimous.

But our concern is with the *fact* which it discloses. Turn Augustin's words into a syllogism, and it will stand thus:

Augustin is greater than Jerome, according to the honours which have been created by the custom of the Church.

But Augustin is greater than Jerome, as a Bishop is greater than a Presbyter.

Therefore, a Bishop is greater than a Presbyter by the custom of the Church.

Here, now, is Augustin himself, a Bishop of no common character, disclaiming, unequivocally, the institution of Episcopacy by divine right, : For he refers the distinction between Bishop and Presbyter not only to a merely human original, but to an original the least imperative ; to one which, however potent it becomes in the lapse of time, is at first too humble to arrogate authority, too feeble to excite alarm, and too noiseless almost to attract notice. He calls it the creature of *custom*. What shall we say to this testimony of Augustin ? He was under no necessity of revealing his private opinion. He had no temptation to sap the foundation of his own edifice ; to diminish the dignity of his own order.—All his interests and his prejudices lay in the opposite direction. Yet he speaks of Episcopacy as the child of custom, in the most frank and unreserved manner ; without an apology, without a qualification, without a caution. He does this in a letter to JEROME, the very man to whom, upon *modern* Episcopal principles, he should not, would not, and could not have done it—the very man who had openly, and boldly, and repeatedly attacked the whole hierarchy ; whose sentiments, reasonings, and proofs, were no secret to others, and could be none to him—the very man, whose profound research, whose vigorous talent, and whose imposing name, rendered him the most formidable adversary of the prelature, and threatened to sway more decisively the public opinion, than a thousand inferiour writers—the very man, therefore, whom it became

his duty to resist. Yet to this man does Augustin, the Bishop, write a letter in which he assigns to Episcopacy the very same origin which Jerome himself had ascribed to it——*human custom*!!

Was Augustin ignorant? Was he treacherous? Was he cowardly? Was he mad? To write in this manner to Jerome! and to write it with as much composure, and *sang froid*, as he would have alluded to any the most notorious fact in existence! No. He was not ignorant, nor treacherous, nor cowardly, nor mad. But he spoke, in the honesty of his heart, what he knew to be true; and what no well-advised man would think of denying. Such a concession, from such a personage, at such a time, under such circumstances, is conclusive. It shows, that in his day, the Bishops of the Latin Church did not dream of asserting their superiority to Presbyters by divine right. They had it from the custom of the Church, and so long as that custom was undisturbed, it was enough for them. Among the Greeks, the blundering, and hair-brained Epiphanius set up the claim of a *jus divinum*; but his contemporaries were discreet enough to let him fight so foolish a battle single handed.

TO JEROME and AUGUSTIN we may add PELAGIUS, once their intimate friend, and afterwards, on account of his heresy, their sworn enemy. “He re-stricts all Church officers to *priest* and *deacon**: “and asserts, that *priests*, without discrimination or “restriction, are the *successours of the apostles*†.”—He has more to the same purpose; reasoning as JEROME reasoned, from the Scriptures; and coming, as did SEDULIUS, PRIMASIUS, and others, to the same result; viz. the identity of Bishop and Presbyter†.

* In Rom. xii. † In 1 Cor. i. ‡ Not having access to these writers, we quote from *Jameson's Nazianzen*: p. 176, 177.

Let not the *heresy* of Pelagius be objected to us. Our Arminians will not surely cast opprobrium upon the name of this, their ancient sire. For our parts, we, with Augustin, hold him in detestation, as an enemy of the grace of God. But his heresy does not vitiate his testimony in the present case. Fiercely as he was attacked by Jerome and Augustin, his opinions on the subject of Prelacy made no article of accusation against him as a heretic. Could it have been done with any show of reason, we may be certain it would not have been spared. But the silence of his Prelatical antagonists, on that head is a proof both of the justness of our foregoing comments on AUGUSTIN'S letter, and also of the general fact, that the Bishops were conscious of their inability to meet the question of their order upon the ground of divine right.

There are two considerations which clothe our argument with additional force.

The *first* is, that all *able* heretics, as PELAGIUS confessedly was, in their assault upon the Church of God, direct their batteries against those points in which they deem her to be the least defensible.—Rightly judging, that it is good policy to make a breach, no matter where. Only unsettle the popular mind as to any one object which it has been accustomed to venerate, and the perversion of it with regard to many others, is much facilitated. If, in this policy, *Pelagius* and his coadjutors attacked the authority of the Bishops, they seized upon the defenceless spot; and the bishops were beaten without a struggle. It is easy to perceive what an immense advantage was gained by the heretics in their grand conflict, when their opponents were put fairly in the wrong on an incidental point, but a point which, in itself, touched the very nerves of the public passions.

The *second* consideration is, that persons of such

different conditions, and such hostile feelings, could never have united in a common opinion upon a deeply interesting topic, had not the facts upon which their union rested been perfectly indisputable.

Here is Presbyter and Prelate ; the monk of Palestine, and the African Bishop ; orthodoxy and heresy ; Augustin and Pelagius ; all combining in one and the same declaration—that Episcopacy has no better original than the *custom of the Church* ! Nothing but truth—acknowledged truth—truth which it was vain to doubt, could have brought these jarring materials into such a harmony ; these discordant spirits into such a concurrence.—Stronger evidence it is hardly possible to obtain ; and it would be the very perverseness of incredulity to demand. Yet there are writers who do not blush to look us in the face, and assert that the testimony of the primitive Fathers is *universally* in favour of Episcopacy, as having been established by Christ and his apostles*!!

Does the sun shine ? Is the grass green ? Are stones hard ? Another shove, and we shall be in Dean Berkeley's ideal world !—If every thing sober and solid is to be thus outfaced, there is nothing for it, but to abandon fact and demonstration as chimeras, and to take up what was once the ditty of a fool, but is now the best philosophy,

ΠΑΝΤΑ ΚΟΙΝΩΣ, ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΓΕΛΩΣ, ΚΑΙ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΤΟ ΜΗΔΕΝ.

* ESSAYS, p. 135.

[To be continued.]

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

— 000 —

FOREIGN.

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AFRICAN MISSION.

[Continued from page 184.]

MESSRS. KICHERER and EDWARDS leaving Capetown, May 22, proceeded to Rodezand, where Mr. Voss was then minister. Here they met a hearty welcome, and were set apart to the work of the ministry.

On the 25th of June they left Rodezand, laden with the presents of their friends. Their journey sometimes lay through very difficult passes of the mountains, so that it was necessary to add fourteen oxen to their own, in order to climb the steep ascents. Sometimes they travelled for many days without the sight of a human being, surrounded only by steinbocks and ostriches. Here and there they found a cultivated spot; and were hospitably entertained by the farmers, who occasionally gave them sheep and other stores. At other times they slept in the open desert, exposed to the danger of lions and tigers, which greatly abound in that country. The narrative, which will shortly be published, contains an account of some special deliverances from the attacks of lions, which were wonderfully providential.

About the end of July they passed the last inhabited house of Rockfield, and found the country almost without a blade of grass. The eggs of the ostriches, however, contributed to their comfortable support. After travelling seven days without meeting a human creature, they arrived at a place where a few Boschemen resided, three of whom came to them. Next day they were visited by about twenty more. At length they reached the spot intended for their abode, which they called Happy Prospect Fountain; and immediately began to build a house and plant a garden.

Here they commenced their labours, among thirty or forty people, first teaching them to spell Dutch. The Lord was

now pleased to send them a man and his wife, who, understanding the language both of the Hottentots and of the Dutch, became very useful to them as their interpreter, &c. The people among whom he laboured were chiefly Boschemen; the most savage and ferocious of that country. The doctrine of a Supreme Being was entirely unknown to them; they did not know they had immortal souls; but were, in most respects, "like the beasts that perish." Their habitations are generally among the rocks, where they dig a small round den, about three feet deep, which they sometimes cover with reeds. Here they spend most of their time in sleep, except when roused by hunger, when they sally forth in quest of some wild beasts; but when unsuccessful in this attempt, they make shift to subsist upon snakes, mice, or wild onions: and such is their idleness, that rather than be at the pains of seeking food, they will live several days together without it!

The people being in general afraid to come near an European, Mr. Kicherer was under the necessity of tempting them at first, by giving them a little tobacco; of which they are extravagantly fond. He would then take the opportunity of showing, that the great difference between the Christians and themselves, in the superior comforts enjoyed by the former, was occasioned by their knowledge of God; of whose nature and perfections they would hear with great astonishment.

At first, Mr. Kicherer attempted to preach to them systematically;—but he found little effect from this. He then had recourse to the method which the Moravians found the most useful, simply preaching the love and death of Jesus Christ, and inviting them to come to him, that they might have life.—He would tell them, how happy he found his own heart when the love of God was shed abroad in it; and would advise them to go aside and pray that the Lord would teach them, and that he would cause them by his Spirit, to know whether he was his messenger or not.

For a considerable time he remained in painful uncertainty, whether his labours were blessed to the real conversion of any of his hearers. Yet, in this situation he was enabled to leave the matter with God,—desiring to be faithful, whether successful or not. From that time, his labours were greatly blessed. He had the most undoubted evidence of the solid conversion of many souls. One of the first of these was a man, called John, who was brought under deep conviction of sin; for he had been a most notorious offender. He lived but about five or six months after; during which time his

experience was wonderful. His heart was wholly taken up with the love of Christ, so that he could scarcely bear to speak of worldly things: and he died rejoicing in the Lord, saying to his teacher, "I die, depending on the blood and righteousness of Christ; I go to heaven, and there I will wait for you."—His son, who came from a distance to see his dying father, was also converted, obtained his liberty from his master, and is now usefully employed as a school-master in the settlement.

Mr. Kicherer would sometimes take a walk in the fields, and find, scattered here and there, prostrate on the ground, several of his congregation; and some with a child in each hand, pouring out their souls to God in the most lively and copious strains. Thus was he encouraged to go forward amidst his arduous labours. Before he left Zak River to visit Europe, he had baptized about thirty-four adult persons, and fifty children. He had a stated congregation of about six hundred persons, in a great measure civilized, and dwelling together.

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY.

The Editors regret, that circumstances beyond their control have prevented them from receiving the details of the following account at an earlier period.

DIED, at Newtown, Long-Island, March 13, the Rev. NATHAN WOODHULL, pastor of the Presbyterian Church in that place, aged 53 years.

Mr. WOODHULL was born at Brookhaven, Long-Island.— He received the rudiments of his education in the common schools of that town. In 1775, he graduated at Yale College; and for the six succeeding years followed farming and merchandize. In 1779, he received his first religious impressions, and determined to devote himself to the ministry of the word. Having studied divinity under the Rev. John Davenport, at Oyster Ponds, on the east end of Long-Island, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Long-Island, in June, 1784, to preach the Gospel. In December, 1785, he was ordained pastor of the congregation at Huntington, which situation he left in December, 1788, on account of divisions in the congregation. In 1790, he became pastor of the congregation in Newtown, where he remained to his death.

From infancy, his health was infirm: and after entering college, he was prevented from proceeding in his studies, for one whole year, during a considerable part of which, his life was considered in danger. During his settlement in Newtown, he expected every year would terminate his labours. It was not an unusual thing for him to go from his bed to the pulpit; but more frequently from the pulpit to his bed.— Four different times he has fainted in the pulpit. But notwithstanding this ill health, he was enabled to preach to his people with less interruption than falls usually to the lot of more healthy ministers. His ministerial labours among his people had, for some months previous to his death, been considerably greater than usual, and their attention seemed somewhat awakened to the concerns of religion. This gave him new zeal, and made him more engaged in his public administrations, anxiously longing and hoping for an ingathering of souls.

Obituary. Death of Rev. Nathan Woodhull. 537

He was taken ill on Saturday, the 24th February last, with a fever, which continued, with little abatement, to his death. His lungs, which for many years appeared to be affected, suffered most during his sickness. His breathing was difficult, and a distressing cough, with copious expectoration, attended him to the last. He decidedly, from the first, declared his opinion, that he should never recover. He was not, however, alarmed; for he knew in whom he believed. After being ill about a week, under the firm conviction that his sickness was unto death, he made his will, and mentioned the spot where he wished his body to be interred. After this, he seemed released from earth, and he conversed, almost exclusively, on the concerns of eternity.

He had for many years been subject to temporary and partial derangement of mind, especially when fatigued or indisposed. During his last illness, however, his mind was greatly composed and serene, seldom clouded, notwithstanding high fever. He repeatedly expressed his thankfulness to God for this great goodness; as also for the full experience he had of the consolations of those truths which he had preached to others. He blessed God, in that he had enabled him to preach these truths with plainness, and, he trusted, with faithfulness. In his petitions to the throne of God, which were constant, he always commended his dear flock to the care of the great Head of the Church; praying that the truths they had heard from his lips might not be like water spilled on the ground. He often spake in strong terms of the abundant fulness and all-sufficiency of the atonement made for sin by the blood of Christ, and blessed God for the gift of faith, by which he hoped to lay hold of that "inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled, and which fadeth not away."

His bodily sufferings, though at times extreme beyond expression, he bore with Christian fortitude and patience. Frequently, on being asked if his hiccup, which was almost incessant, distressed him much, he answered, "Yes; but it is all right; my sufferings are the effect of sin, but they are infinitely less than my deserts. Glory, glory, give glory to God, who orders and disposes of all things in infinite wisdom, and who cannot err; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever!"

On requesting a friend to read some comforting texts of Scripture to him, he added, "Not that my faith is in the least shaken, but it cannot be too strong, or firmly fixed."

Wednesday night, previous to his death, his bodily pain

and distress became very extreme. He desired some select passages of Scripture might be read to him. Among others, the 14th chapter of John was read, some part of which he repeated with great emphasis, and expressed much inward satisfaction. In broken accents he prayed with much ardour, for resignation to the divine will, and for support in his last struggles, that his passage from time into eternity might, if consistent with the will of heaven, be speedy and easy. He began to repeat Watts' Hymn, "Oh! if my Lord would come and meet."—His hiccup interrupting him so much, he could proceed no further than this line, he desired a friend to repeat it for him.—He appeared almost in transport with the following verse:—

" Jesus can make a dying bed
" Feel soft as downy pillows are,
" While on his breast I lean my head,
" And breathe my life out sweetly there."

In the course of the night he desired his attendants would sing a hymn. He made several attempts to join them. His voice, however, being broken, and much interrupted by hiccup, he could not proceed, but appeared delighted by the singing of others. He afterwards desired a friend to pray with him. He considered his last moments to be drawing near, and requested his family should be called up. He addressed each, individually, as they drew round his bed, and in a strain of piety and devotion adapted to the solemnity of the occasion, earnestly importuned them to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, assuring them that every other needed blessing would be added to them. The scene was indeed a most interesting one, more readily conceived than described.

Toward the close of the day, on Saturday, being in very great distress, and apprehensive that his dissolution was rapidly approaching, after requesting his family should be called in, and they, with a number of his friends, were seated around him, he called for a sermon which he had partly committed to paper just before his confinement, intending to have delivered it the next Lord's day. The subject was the *Faithfulness of God*: he desired a part of it should be read, which being done, he addressed them in these words:—

" These sentiments, (alluding to what had been read,) my dear children, I desire you to cherish in your memory, and let them sink deeply into the hearts of each one of you, as the

sincere sentiments of your dying father; who, in his last moments, can testify to the faithfulness of his God. You have heard, that he will faithfully reward, with the joys of heaven and eternal life, all those who love him, and diligently seek him. Remember, also, that he has threatened eternal death and everlasting misery, to all those who know not God, and desire not the knowledge of his ways. Let me assure you, his faithfulness is equally pledged for the execution of his awful threatenings and righteous judgments, as for his promises of everlasting happiness to those who love him. True, he is a God of mercy; but remember, he is also a God of *justice*: and whilst he rewards the righteous, will also punish the wicked. Accept the pardon which he tenders you in the gospel of his Son; embrace the Lord Jesus, who suffered and died on the cross, that you might be ransomed from your sins; no longer slight the offers of salvation; delay not the concerns of your precious souls to a dying hour; presume not too much on the forbearance of God: his mercy, though infinite, cannot extend to the impenitent."—After closing his admonition, he requested a near and dear friend, who had been much with him, to pray with him. This being done, he raised his hands, and with uplifted countenance, and voice much interrupted by hiccup, addressed the throne of grace in a most ardent and affectionate prayer. First he commended his fellow creatures generally to God; next his dear congregation; then his wife and children; and last, his own soul. The following are a part of his closing words:

"O blessed Jesus! wholly and confidently relying on thine *atoning blood*, I come to thee, dear Jesus; I have nothing to bring; no merits to plead, but thine! I come, presenting thee my naked, *naked* soul; take it, O my God! take it to thyself, for Jesus' sake!"

A short time after this, he asked one of his physicians if he thought it likely he would continue through the night? the doctor replied, I think it not improbable. He then said, " 'Tis my desire, if consistent with God's will, to depart on the Lord's day."

On the sabbath before his death, he requested his daughter to turn to Watts' 189th Hymn, B. 1. entitled, Hope in the Covenant. As she read, he repeated with much emphasis, and especially the last verse. He frequently, through his illness, desired to have passages of Scripture read, sometimes selected by himself, sometimes by others, and always expressed much comfort in them.

Being asked if he feared to meet death, he replied, "I fear only its pangs, which have been a dread to me through life." He frequently charged his physicians to conceal nothing from him, and when they discovered his last change approaching, not to fail announcing it to him. He often inquired of them, "have you no good news to communicate to me?"—"Do you see any prospect of my speedy release?" Frequently he observed, "I desire I may have patience to wait the time appointed for me; yet I cannot but long to depart, that I may be with Christ." The evening previous to his departure, when his pulse began to falter, one of his physicians asked him, "Would it afford you comfort, if you could consider this as the last night of your sufferings here?" He eagerly caught the import of the question, and apparently almost transported, exclaimed,—“Oh, I should rejoice in the prospect! Come, Lord Jesus, O come quickly!”—Early the next morning his room was thronged with his friends and parishioners of both sexes, most of them in tears; he readily recognized each individual, and when he could no longer speak, he tenderly embraced several of them in his dying arms, and kissing each, bade them adieu.

He evidently retained his recollection and reason, until a few moments of his last gasp, and while his hands or lips could move, he appeared to be in prayer.

He expired at 12 in the morning, of Tuesday, 13th March, 1810. His congregation at all times were affectionate and kind to him; were deeply impressed with his last sickness, and peculiarly attentive to him during the whole course of it. After his death, they requested the family to permit them to pay their last solemn respects to his memory, by interring his remains at their own charge.

A sermon was delivered at his interment, by Dr. Milledoler, from Matthew, 24th chapter, 45, 46, and 47th verses, to a very crowded audience.